



**Arizona Adult Education**  
**Assessment Requirements PY 2013-2014**

**State Context for Assessment**

**Overview**

The assessment requirements in this document provide a detailed explanation of the state and local program responsibilities for student assessment specific to the National Reporting System (NRS) and state requirements. These requirements apply to the approved assessments and test administration procedures that programs must use to report educational gains in compliance with NRS requirements.

Programs must adhere to the assessment requirements identified in order to provide fair and equitable access to services for learners, identify the need for program improvement, and make consistent judgments about learner placement and advancement.

The assessment requirements are based on Arizona Adult Education historical data and test publisher's guidelines (CTB McGraw/Hill) for the approved assessments.

**NRS requirements and accountability**

The use of reliable and valid learner assessments is basic to any functioning assessment requirement. An assessment is considered **valid** *if it has been determined to accurately measure the skills and abilities that it claims to measure*. An assessment is considered **reliable** *if it can consistently measure the skills and abilities of all learners for which the assessment was designed*.

Arizona's Adult Education requires the uniform implementation and administration of valid and reliable assessment instruments that align to the NRS levels in order to document student achievement.

Uniform implementation of assessment procedures benefits the learner, the program, and the State by ensuring:

- Setting uniform program performance standards,
- Establishing a uniform basis for performance-based funding awards,
- Measuring learners' educational gains according to a uniform standard, and;
- Comparing the success of programs in meeting performance standards.

Instructional functions of assessment include:

- Determining the effectiveness of instruction,
- Determining the specific needs of adult learners, and;
- Identifying statewide professional development needs.

Arizona Department of Education, Adult Education Services (ADE/AES) encourages programs and individual instructors to use supplemental assessments to aid in identifying learner needs and guiding instruction. These alternate assessments, however, no matter how useful as a supplement for informing instruction, may not substitute for the standardized instruments prescribed for NRS reporting and educational gain measurement.

### Summary

So that ADE/AES operations can be aligned with assessment objectives, all adult education programs funded by the state of Arizona must use the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE, forms 9 & 10) for ABE and ASE levels and the TABE CLAS-E for ESL (ELAA) learners. Local programs' assessment procedures must follow the publishers' guidelines and the established state requirement. Programs must administer an initial test to all learners within the first 12 hours of instruction and must follow up with a progress test during the period allowed under state requirement as described in this document. Uniform implementation of the assessment procedures outlines here is necessary for the successful comparison of program efforts and will be monitored by ADE/AES. Deviance from the requirements and procedures outlined here will be seen as a compliance issue and will be dealt with accordingly.

Direct questions on assessment requirements and procedure or requests for technical assistance to:

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## GENERAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

### TRAINING

Program personnel can administer the assessment only after receiving training from ADE/AES personnel or an ADE sponsored training from CTB McGraw/Hill personnel and reading the appropriate manual (*TABE forms 9/10: Survey, Test Directions or TABE CLAS-E Test Manual Test, Directions*).

- A minimum of at least 1 person must be trained to administer assessments from each program.
  - The additional number of trained administrators is at the program's discretion.
- Staff members must be trained before they can administer an assessment.
- Assessment staff must take a refresher course every 2 years.

- **TABE 9/10 Refresher Trainings**

- **For Teachers:**

- ✓ TABE 9/10 Test Administrator Training
    - ✓ Using the TABE for Instruction
    - ✓ TABE 9/10 Online Refresher Course

- **For Other TABE Administrators:**

- ✓ TABE 9/10 Test Administrator Training
    - ✓ TABE 9/10 Online Refresher Course

- **CLAS-E Refresher Trainings**

- **For Teachers:**

- ✓ CLAS-E Test Administrator Training
    - ✓ Using The CLAS-E for Instruction
    - ✓ CLAS-E Online Refresher Course (*Coming Soon*)

- **For Other CLAS-E Administrators:**

- ✓ CLAS-E Test Administrator Training
    - ✓ CLAS-E Online Refresher Course (*Coming Soon*)

ADE/AES will maintain a list of authorized test administrators by adult education program.

ADE/AES will provide monthly assessment trainings throughout the year as needed.

Teachers and other local staff involved in gathering, analyzing, compiling and reporting data for the NRS will receive training in a variety of ways including formal training sessions provided by the State, regional workshops in conjunction with the Arizona Association of Lifelong Learning and at the local program level through staff events and technical assistance provided by the State.

At a minimum, trainings will include NRS requirements, accountability requirements, the data collection process, definitions of measures, and standardized processes for conducting assessments.

## ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

### ALL Learners

Local providers must use the State and NRS approved assessments to measure the educational gain of all learners, including Distance Learning learners. Assessments are approved by the United States Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Division of Adult Education and Literacy (ED/OVAE/DAEL) for use in National Reporting System (NRS) and were selected by ADE/AES based on recommendations from field-based teams. They are standardized assessments. Validity and reliability must be maintained through a standardized delivery process. Test administration must not deviate from the procedures described by the publisher, CTB McGraw/Hill.

Programs must administer all assessments to learners, including Distance Learning learners, in person at a proctored program site. Assessments not conducted through face-to-face interaction with a trained test administrator in a secure setting are not allowed for NRS reporting.

Assessment should be considered part of the instructional process and results should guide student learning.

If a learner returns to the program after 90 calendar days of inactivity, it is necessary to administer a new initial assessment.

Learner demographic, assessment, goal preference, goal attainment, and attendance information must be entered into NRSpro **monthly** to reflect current learner activity. Programs are expected to enter the prior month's data by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

### **All Learners: Initial Assessment**

The first assessment given to a learner in each fiscal year is called the initial assessment. For learners whose attendance crosses fiscal years, the latest assessment results entered between May 2 and June 30 of the previous fiscal year becomes the initial placement level in the new fiscal year.

- The initial assessment must be administered to the learner during the first 12 hours after registration
- Assessments should be given in all areas in which it is expected that the learner will receive instruction.
- Assessment results, combined with other evaluative information, must be used to direct individual learner studies.
- Learner placement will follow the NRS guidelines. For NRS reporting purposes, the learner's initial placement level will be determined by the lowest **scale score**. **Scale scores** must be used to measure and report:
  - Educational Gains: An NRS placement level increase based on a progress test in the lowest scale score initial placement subject. Educational Gain is determined when the

learner's progress test scale score places him or her into a level above the initial placement. For learners whose initial score places them into ASE II, successfully passing the GED test is the only way to report an Educational Gain.

- Educational Advancements: Any NRS level increase achieved by a student in a content area. Educational Advancement, an Arizona measure of success, is determined when the learner's progress test scale score places him or her into a level above the initial placement.

### **All Learners: Progress Assessment**

Any test given after the initial test is called a progress test.

A learner may have multiple progress tests during a fiscal year; however, progress test timeframes must be adhered to.

Exceptions to progress test timeframes should be limited and rare and must be documented on the "Progress Assessment Exception Form" and kept with student records.

Advancements and Educational Gains are determined by comparing the learner's initial assessment with an alternate form of the same level test given at a later time.

Progress test timeframes are set by ED/OVAE/DAEL. Timeframes indicated in this assessment policy reflect those announced on 01/19/2011.

The target progress test rate for Arizona is 75%.

### **TABE 9 & 10**

The TABE Survey form for version 9/10, TABE PC and TABE Online are approved for use as the NRS measures of Educational Gains for all ABE and ASE level learners in Arizona, including those enrolled in Distance Learning.

### **TABE 9 & 10: Assessment Practices**

The TABE is a standardized assessment. Validity and reliability must be maintained through a standardized delivery process; test administration must not deviate from the procedures described by the publisher, CTB McGraw/Hill.

The assessment process for ABE/ASE learners must begin with the TABE Locator. As long as there is no significant gap in service (6 months or more), the Locator does not need to be given after the first time. The Locator may not be used for initial placement or progress testing. Occasionally the Locator indicates inappropriate Survey levels for learners.

Assessment personnel and instructors should be aware that scores are most reliable for diagnostic and instructional purposes when they fall near the middle of the distribution of scores (40-75%). Those whose scores are near the high end of the test may know more than the test allows them to demonstrate. Similarly, those whose scores are near the low end may indicate that the test was too challenging. The assessor may use professional judgment and choose to administer a more appropriate Survey level in either of these cases.

After determining the appropriate Survey level, assessments should be given in Reading, Writing and Mathematics unless the student specifically requests instruction in fewer areas.

Any test given after the initial test is called a progress test. A valid progress test is the alternate form of the same level tests as the initial assessment. A learner may have multiple progress tests. Arizona Advancements and NRS Education Gains are determined by comparing the learner's initial assessment with the appropriate form of the same level test. Per publisher's guideline's, TABE 9 and 10 are appropriate alternate tests.

#### **TABE 9 & 10: Official Score Ranges**

Use official score ranges for both initial and progress assessments for NRS reporting purposes.

<b>NRS Level</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Total Math</b>
<b>ABE Beginning Literacy (BL)</b>	160 - 367	175 - 389	180 - 313
<b>ABE Beginning Basic Education (ABE 1)</b>	368 - 460	390 - 490	314 - 441
<b>ABE Low Intermediate (ABE 2)</b>	461 - 517	491 - 523	442 - 505
<b>ABE High Intermediate (ABE 3)</b>	518 - 566	524 - 559	506 - 565
<b>Low Adult Secondary Education (ASE 1)</b>	567 - 595	560 - 585	566 - 594
<b>High Adult Secondary Education (ASE2)</b>	596 - 812	586 - 826	595 - 775

#### **Recommended Initial Score Ranges (optional use)**

Instructors and assessors may notice that test scores alone don't accurately indicate a learner's abilities and that the level of the test administered (whether L, E, M, D, or A) affects the results. ADE/AES has developed recommended initial score ranges by test level to aid professional judgment in determining whether the appropriate test was given.

Test Level	Reading	Language	Total Math
L	160 - 393		180 - 338
E	322 - 477	510 or less	298 - 457
M	437 - 537	469 - 547	424 - 525
D	489 - 585	506 - 568	490 - 577
A	544 +	545 +	551 +

### **TABE 9 & 10 Progress Test Timeframes**

Exceptions to the guidelines below should be limited and rare and must be documented on the "Progress Assessment Exception Form."

NRS Test and Initial Placement	Progress Test Timeframe
TABE 9 & 10 ABE BL, ABE 1, ABE 2, & ABE 3	<b>Minimum</b> of <b>40</b> hours of instruction after the initial assessment. (Publisher recommends testing between 50-60 hours of instruction.)
TABE 9 & 10 ASE 1 & ASE 2	<b>Minimum</b> of <b>30</b> hours of instruction after the initial assessment. (Publisher recommends testing between 30-39 hours of instruction.)

### **TABE CLAS-E**

The CLAS-E is a standardized assessment. Validity and reliability must be maintained through a standardized delivery process; test administration must not deviate from the procedures described by the publisher, CTB McGraw/Hill.

### **CLAS-E Assessment Practice**

The TABE CLAS-E forms A and B are approved for use as the NRS measures of Educational Gains for all ESL (ELAA) level learners in Arizona, including those enrolled in Distance Learning.

The assessment process for ESL (ELAA) learners must begin with the CLAS-E Locator. As long as there is no significant gap in service (6 months or more), the Locator does not need to be given after the first time. The Locator may not be used for initial placement or progress testing. Occasionally, the Locator indicates inappropriate levels for learners. Assessment personnel and instructors should be aware that score are most reliable for diagnostic and instructional purposes when they fall near the middle of the distribution of scores (40-75%). Those whose scores are near the high end of the test may know more than the test allows them to demonstrate. Similarly, those whose scores are near the low end may indicate that the test was too challenging. The assessor may use professional judgment and choose to administer a more appropriate CLAS-E level in either of these cases.

ESL (ELAA) learners must be assessed with the CLAS-E Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing per publisher's guidelines. Composite scale scores for Speaking/Listening and Reading/Writing must be used for reporting purposes.

Any test given after the initial test is called a progress test. A valid progress test is the alternate form of the same level tests as the initial assessment. A learner may have multiple progress tests. Arizona Advancements and NRS Education Gains are determined by comparing the learner's initial assessment with the appropriate form of the same level test. Per publisher's guideline's, CLAS-E forms A and B are appropriate alternate tests.

**IMPORTANT:** If a learner places initially into ESOL 5, it is up to the program to decide whether to continue assessing with the CLAS-E or to begin testing with the TABE. If the decision is made to begin testing with the TABE, do not enter the CLAS-E scores into NRSpro.com. Instead, the assessment record should begin with the TABE initial placement so that future educational gains will be measured against the correct assessment.

### **TABE CLAS-E: Official Score Ranges**

The TABE CLAS-E is a standardized assessment. Validity and reliability must be maintained through a standardized delivery process; test administration must not deviate from the procedures described by the publisher, CTB McGraw/Hill.

Use official score ranges for both initial and progress assessments for NRS reporting purposes. Composite scores must be used in NRSpro.com.

<b>NRS Level</b>	<b>Listening &amp; Speaking</b> (scale score Listening + scale score Speaking = Total Score. Total Score ÷ 2 = Composite Score)	<b>Reading &amp; Writing</b> (scale score Reading + scale score Writing* = Total Score. Total Score ÷ 2 = Composite Score)
ESL Beginning Literacy (ELAA BL)	Less than 407	Less than 394
ESL Beginning Low (ELAA 1)	408 – 449	395 - 441
ESL Beginning High (ELAA 2)	450 – 485	442 – 482
ESL Intermediate Low (ELAA 3)	486 – 525	483 – 514
ESL Intermediate High (ELAA 4)	526 – 558	515 - 556
ESL Advanced (ELAA 5)	559 – 599	557 - 599

\* Use the Writing Test Book and the Expository Writing Folio scores to determine a Writing raw score; then use the Writing score Table to convert the raw score to a scale score.



**NOTE:** A composite score of 600 or high on a level 3 or 4 progress test in Reading/Writing and Listening/Speaking indicates that the learner has completed ESL Advanced (ELAA 5) and can begin assessment with TABE 9/10.

### **Recommended Initial Score Ranges (optional use)**

Instructors and assessors may notice that test scores alone don't accurately indicate a learner's abilities and that the level of the test administered (whether 1, 2, 3 or 4) affects the results. ADE/AES has developed recommended initial score ranges by test level to aid professional judgment in determining whether the appropriate test was given.

Test Level	Listening & Speaking	Reading & Writing
1	230 – 449	225 – 441
2	408 – 485	395 – 482
3*	450 – 525	442 – 514
4*	526+	515+
*If 600+ - consider using TABE 9/10 Locator and Survey		

### **TABE CLAS-E: Progress Test Timeframe**

Exceptions to the guidelines below should be limited and rare and must be documented on the "Progress Assessment Exception Form."

NRS Test and Initial Placement	Progress Test Timeframe
CLAS-E All ESL (ELAA) levels	<b>Minimum</b> of 50 hours of instruction after the initial assessment. (Publisher recommends testing between 60-95 hours of instruction.)

### **INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT ADMINISTRATION**

Help for people with learning disabilities and difficulties can take two forms: accommodations and adaptations.

- If a Learner has a documented learning disability, it is generally in his or her interest to present the documentation to the program before assessment has taken place so that an appropriate **accommodation** can be made (see categories 2 and 3 below). Learners may document a disability and the need for accommodation through professional evaluative documents from a psychologist, physician or school records. Accommodations will be made for learners with documented learning disabilities and must be applied in conformance with the publisher's guidelines. A list of acceptable accommodations can be found in the "Guide to Administering TABE 9 & 10" from CTB McGraw/Hill or at [www.ctb.com/accommodations](http://www.ctb.com/accommodations). The length of time the documentation is allowed to be used varies by type of disability.

- If, on the other hand, the learner does not have a documented disability, but has discovered that he or she learns best through some adaptation of the instructional environment, that should also be made known to the program before the initial assessment takes place so that the **adaptation** can be made and accurate placement information can be obtained (see category 3 below). Adaptations for learners with learning difficulties may be given upon request and without a learning disabilities diagnosis. Suitable adaptations are colored transparent overlays, clear transparent overlays and a highlighter, temporary adhesives with spatial directions, earplugs, large print test edition (if available), magnifying device, priority seating, hats or caps to minimize the effects of fluorescent lighting, or an unmarked straightedge. Arizona Adult Education Services office will provide technical assistance to programs requesting help in determining appropriate adaptations.

New thinking of the subject of Inclusive Assessment Administration is reflected below, and taken from the CTB McGraw/Hill website:

<http://www.ctb.com/ctb.com/control/ctbBestPracticesShowAction/p=ctbResearch&article=475>.

In general, accommodations like those described in Category 2 and 3 (below) should be noted in the learner's record; GED Testing policies should also be reviewed if passing the GED Test is the ultimate goal since they require a stricter level of documentation than is necessary with either the TABE or CLAS-E assessments.

- **Category 1**

Category 1 accommodations are not expected to influence student performance in a way that alters the standard interpretation of either criterion- or norm-referenced test scores. Individual student scores obtained using Category 1 accommodations should be interpreted in the same way as the score of other students who take the test under default conditions. These students' scores should be included in summaries of results without notation of accommodation(s).

Example of a Category 1 Accommodation: Take the test alone of in a study carrel. *This and similar accommodations compose Category 1. These accommodations are not expected to affect the interpretation of individual students' criterion- or norm-referenced scores. Both individual results and summaries can be treated in the same manner as those for students who do not use accommodations. Individual student scores can be interpreted directly, and student scores can be included in the aggregate score reports without special notation of the accommodation.*

- **Category 2**

Category 2 accommodations may have an effect on student performance that should be considered when interpreting individual criterion- or norm-referenced test scores. In the absence of research demonstrating otherwise, test scores and any consequences or decision associated with them should be interpreted in light of the accommodation(s) used.

Example of a Category 2 Accommodation: Use extra testing time for any timed test. *The accommodation of giving extra time may have an effect on student performance that should be*

*considered when interpreting students' scores. Category 2 comprises accommodations that may affect the interpretation of individual students' criterion- or norm-referenced scores. CTB McGraw/Hill recommends that individual student scores obtained with Category 2 accommodations be interpreted in light of the accommodation(s) used.*

- **Category 3**

Category 3 accommodations are likely to change what is being measured and have an effect that alters the interpretation of individual criterion- and norm-referenced scores. This occurs when the accommodations is strongly related to the knowledge, skill, or ability being measured (e.g., the use of Braille test where not all items in the non-Braille version are administered in Braille). In the absence of research demonstrating otherwise, criterion- and norm-referenced test scores and any consequences or decisions associated with them should be interpreted not only in light of the accommodation(s) used, but also in light of how the accommodation(s) may alter what is measured.

Example of a Category 3 Accommodation: Use a calculator for mathematics computation test. *The accommodation of using a calculator for the computation test may have an effect on student' criterion- and norm-referenced scores and may change what is being measured. Consider the skills a student must demonstrate to solve the following problem with and without a calculator:*

*Subtract:  $3,348 - 2,954 = x$*

*A student taking the item under default conditions, "without a calculator," must demonstrate the ability to subtract and apply the concept of "regrouping." A student using a calculator does not need to apply the concept of "regrouping," but instead must demonstrate the ability to perform subtraction on a calculator. The skill measured by this item is clearly different for students using a calculator than for those who do not, and both criterion- and norm-referenced scores must be interpreted accordingly.*

*Most Category 3 accommodations are specific to the test content. CTB McGraw/Hill recommends carefully considering the relationship between the test content and desired inference and the accommodation when interpreting individual student scores obtained using Category 3 accommodations.*

Often, accommodations are not provided singly; rather by nature they require a combination of accommodations (such as providing a separate test setting for students receiving extra time or an oral accommodation). Score interpretations should consider the assessment accommodation combination and whether any or all of the accommodations will change what is being measured. When categorizing accommodations, particularly when tracking for policy purposes, concurrent accommodations should be categorized at the highest-probability level. For example,

if one accommodation is a Category 1 and another, given concurrently, is a Category 3, the higher of the two (Category 3) should be considered and documented.

### **MONITORING LOCAL PROGRAMS**

Programs will be monitored for compliance to the Arizona Assessment Requirements. As part of the compliance review:

- Programs are required to complete a Program Data Quality Checklist annually. It is submitted to ADE/AES with final reports.
- ADE/AES staff monitors program assessment data monthly as part of their regular desk monitoring schedule. Desk monitoring includes checks for completeness, accuracy, and adherence to a monthly schedule for data entry.
- On-site monitoring takes place in according to a 3-year cycle as part of local program operations monitoring.

